DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 249 636 EA 017 202

TITLE	Communication: A Tool for School Improvement.
INSTITUTION	Southwest Educational Development Lab., Austin, Tex.
SPONS AGENCY	National Inst. of Education (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	Nov 82
CONTRACT	400-80-0107
NOTE	66p.; Developed from papers offered at a conference of the same name (Austin, Texas, June 22-24, 1982). Portions of document may not reproduce clearly due to small print.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021) -- Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Communication Skills; *Educational Environment; *Educational Improvement; Elementary Secondary Education; Mass Media; Publicity; *Public Relations; Resource Materials; *School Community Relationship
IDENTIFIERS	*Research and Development Exchange

ABSTRACT

Participants representing public relations offices in state education agencies and school districts in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas attended a conference held to explore positive approaches to school public relations. There were three objectives set to meet this general purpose: (1) to increase awareness of the School Climate program as one means of accentuating the positive; (2) to provide various approaches and information to enhance external communication for school improvement; and (3) to provide information and strategies to facilitate internal lines of communication for total school improvement. These conference proceedings synthesize the content of the following presentations: "School Climate" (Barbara Case); "Getting Your Message to the Public" and "Surveying Your Community" (Larry Ascough); "Working with the Media" (Rodney Davis); "Involving Total Staff for Good P.R." (Bonnie Ellison); "I Have Met the Enemy and They Is Us" (Barbara Dudlacek); and "Internal Communications" (Mary O'Neill). Copies of handouts distributed by the speakers, the conference agenda, and an evaluation are also included. (MLF)

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COMMUNICATION: A TOOL FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

SOUTHWEST EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LABORATORY
211 East Seventh Street, Austin, Texas 78701

November, 1982

EA 017 202

FUNDING INFORMATION

Project Title:	Regional Exchange Project
Contract Number:	400-80-0107 (Project A-1)
Contract Source:	Department of Education National Institute of Education Washington, D.C.
Contractor:	Southwest Educational Development Laboratory 211 E. 7th Street Austin, Texas 78701
Project Staff:	Martha L. Smith (Director), Nancy Baker Jones, Jan Johnson Keith, Ginger Pfister, John D. Westbrook
Disclaimer:	The project presented or reported herein was performed pursuant to a contract from the National Institute of Education, Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the National Institute of Education and no official endorsement by the National Institute of Education should be inferred.

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FOREWORD

The SEDL Regional Exchange (SEDL/RX) Project provides information and technical assistance services to educators in six states: Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. It is one of eight Regional Exchanges in the nation-wide Research and Development Exchange (RDx), funded by the National Institute of Education, which lists as a major goal the dissemination of information about educational research and development (R&D). To assist in accomplishing this goal, the SEDL/RX staff designed and sponsored the Communications: A Tool for School Improvement conference in Austin, Texas on June 22-24, 1982. In an effort to record and pass on to others some of the knowledge that was shared during that meeting, this document was developed.

This is the ninth in a series of R&D SPEAKS conferences sponsored by the SEDL/RX. These conferences provide opportunities for sharing, communicating, and growth among experts in the field and members of the education community.

Preston C. Kronkosky, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Southwest Educational
Development Laboratory

INTRODUCTION

Communication: A Tool for School Improvement was a conference held at the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory on June 22-24, 1982. The conference was sponsored by the Regional Exchange of the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL/RX), a project funded by the National Institute of Education (NIE). The purpose of this conference was to explore positive approaches to school public relations. The participants represented public relations offices in SEAs and LEAs from the six state region. There were three objectives set to meet this general purpose:

- to increase awareness of the School Climate program as one means of accentuating the positive;
- to provide various approaches and information to enhance external communication--both what goes out and what comes in--for school improvement; and
- to provide information and strategies to facilitate internal lines of communication for total school improvement.

Presenters

Vital to the success of any conference is the selection of presenters. SEDL/RX staff looked for presenters who would be both knowledgeable and interesting. Six such presenters were found:

LARRY ASCOUGH has been with Dallas I.S.D. since 1960. He is currently Associate Superintendent for Communications. He is active in the National School Public Relations Association where he has in the past served as both vice-president (1972-74), president elect (1974-75), and president (1975-76). He has authored numerous articles, handbooks, and audiovisual presentations on school communications and has served as a keynote speaker and workshop leader in 25 states and Canada.

BARBARA CASE currently serves as Assistant Principal at Nimitz Junior High in Tulsa, Oklahoma. She has the usual responsibilities of a building level administrator as well as the duties required in a special school serving special clients. She has worked closely with juvenile authorities and other youth serving agencies. Barbara helped develop a

school climate which enhanced the success of students and staff as well as reduced burn-out in a high stress environment. She has conducted numerous workshops on Improving School Climate.

RODNEY DAVIS is Press Officer for Dallas I.S.D. and oversees operation of the Information Services Department. The department is responsible for the information dissemination through both printed and audiovisual media. Rodney is currently vice-president of the National School Public Relations Association for the South Central region. He is also a past president of the Texas School Public Relations Association. He has served as a workshop leader for teacher and administrative educational groups in Texas and many other states.

BONNIE ELLISON is the Public Information Director for Northside I.S.D. in San Antonio, Texas. Bonnie established the Communications Office for Northside I.S.D. and developed policies for internal and external public relations. She is a past president of Texas School Public Relations Association and has served on the Accreditation Committee for NSPRA. A published writer, she is skilled in opinion research, human relations (interpersonal and employee), staff inservice, rumor control, and publicity and promotion. She is a frequent conference speaker and workshop leader.

BARBARA KUDLACEK serves as the Director of Public Information for Topeka Public Schools. She is a NSPRA national consultant, conducting workshops throughout the United States and Canada on various public relations topics. She has spoken on numerous occasions at the AASA convention as well as serving as a guest lecturer at the University of Kansas, Kansas State University, Washburn University, and New Jersey State University. Her district's publications have won national and state awards.

MARY O'NEILL is a Communications Specialist for Fort Worth I.S.D. She has served in the Office of Communications for three years. Her duties include writing and editing both internal and external public information releases and working with the media. She also works with anyone within the administration when special projects are developed. Mary is also charged with the operation of the telephone information center where the public can call to get immediate answers to questions about Fort Worth I.S.D. She is a member of NSPRA and TSPRA, and is currently an officer at the local International Association of Business Communicators.

These conference proceedings for "Communication: A Tool for School Improvement" synthesize the content of the presentations. The conference agenda and evaluation are also included in this document.

Jan Johnson Keith, Conference Coordinator

The Presentations

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Bonnie Ellison provided the kick-off presentation for the first afternoon of the conference by addressing "Good Public Relations: A Positive Approach." She emphasized the need for telling, listening, and recognizing. Telling what's being done in a school, listening to how people both inside and outside the school system feel, and recognizing people who contribute to a successful school are components of a successful PR program. Ellison charged her listeners to "say it straight" and always to strive for "honesty and a sense of humor" as well as "plain ole common sense" within PR programs.

School Climate

Barbara Case pointed out that in dealing with school public relations what we are really dealing with are perceptions. A school can be among the finest in the nation, but if it is not perceived as such then everyone suffers. School Climate is a model for providing positive perceptions about a school environment. The instruments used in the School Climate program to assess how people "feel" about the school are thus perceptual.

Schools must be both productive and satisfying places to teach and learn. Nine common characteristics or indicators which lead to a positive school climate have emerged from identifying schools where positive climate exists.

1) Caring - people inside and outside the system need to have the perception they are cared about.

2) Trust - creating an accepting atmosphere.

3) Respect - trust and respect interact for positive results. It's hard to trust someone you don't respect.

4) School renewal - not just changing for the sake of change, but to rejuvenate.

5) High morale - a feeling of "wellness."

6) Cohesiveness - the feeling of "us" which also reinforces morale.

7) Continuous academic and social growth - a chance for students to assume responsibility, for teachers and principals to make mistakes and for all to grow.

8) Opportunities for input - creating channels to structure input.

9) Effective communication - accurate, true, and honest.

The School Climate Assessment takes the form of mini-audits to look at program and process to determine if a positive school climate exists. These programs and process determinants take the form of characteristics of a positive school climate.

Program Determinants

- opportunities for active learning
- individualized performance expectations
- varied learning environment
- flexible curriculum
- support and structure that are appropriate to the maturity of the students
- involvement of parents and students in cooperatively determining school rules
- varied reward systems

Process Determinants

- problem-solving ability
  - . not afraid to recognize problem
  - . belief that once it's solved, it will stay solved

- improvement of school goals/focus
  - . appropriate for student body
  - . necessary teacher behaviors to achieve goals are recognized
- identification of conflict
  - . seeing conflict as part of growth
- effective communication
  - . in every direction
  - . the right people are hearing about it
- involvement in decision making
  - . real input
  - . not just staff, but parents and students, too
- autonomy with accountability
  - . delegate the task, not the way it's accomplished
  - . stems from trust and respect
- effective teaching/learning strategies
  - . time on task
  - . acceptance of varied learning styles
- ability to plan for the future
  - . information flow important to planning

At some point the School Climate Assessment may also look at the physical plant determinants.

Case introduced a eight step problem solving process to the participants. Its major components are as follows:

1) Write the problem

2) Clarify it

3) List indicators that problem exists

4) Determine the most important indicator

5) Re-write the problem in a positive way

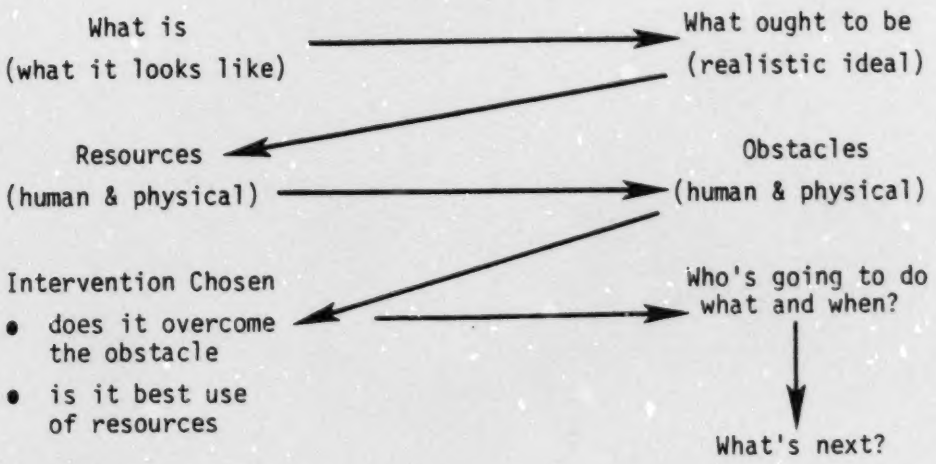
6) Brainstorm alternatives

7) Select most easily implemented alternative and write an action plan

8) Make provisions for evaluation and feedback

The Action Plan might take the form of the following chart:

ACTION PLAN



Following Case's presentation, Dick Lindahl from the Office of Juvenile Justice Programs in Santa Fe, New Mexico, discussed his involvement with the creation of the New Mexico School Climate League. The process is valuable and does work to focus on the positive aspects of the school environment to bring about change where necessary, Lindahl said. Figure 1 illustrates the eight steps in the School Climate improvement process.

SCHOOL CLIMATE IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

EIGHT STEPS

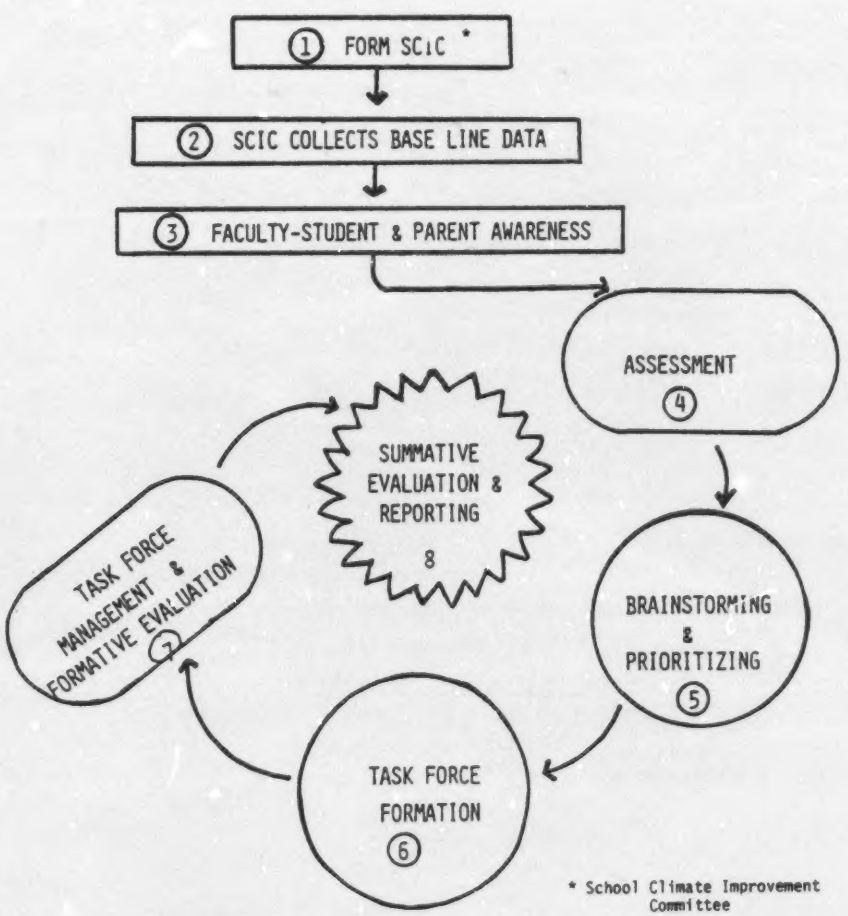

1 FORM SCIC *
2 SCIC COLLECTS BASE LINE DATA
3 FACULTY-STUDENT & PARENT AWARENESS
ASSESSMENT 4
BRAINSTORMING & PRIORITIZING 5
TASK FORCE FORMATION 6
TASK FORCE MANAGEMENT & FORMATIVE EVALUATION 7
SUMMATIVE EVALUATION & REPORTING 8
* School Climate Improvement Committee

Figure 1

Getting Your Message to the Public

Larry Ascough began this address by reminding the participants that planning--or lack of it--is probably the biggest problem in school communication. Coupled with that is the fact that we don't know what we want to communicate. Unfortunately, education is burdened with a great deal of jargon which many people don't understand. So, before worrying about the "how to" in getting your message out, we need to worry about the "what" and the "who."

Ascough also encouraged the participants to discover who their "publics" were. Look for the key people in your own community. He pointed out that in Dallas 70-75% of the community are not parents of school age children. The number of senior citizens has risen so that they can really be looked upon as a resource to help in the schools. Dallas I.S.D. has encouraged participation from senior citizen groups and real estate agents and brokers as well as from a parent involvement program. One point to remember is that if you are going to ask for involvement, tell volunteers how to be involved so that they can meet the district's needs.

Handouts which follow were provided and Ascough discussed each with the participants.

TSPRA MINI-TIP

TOPIC: FIVE WAYS TO GET YOUR MESSAGE TO THE PUBLIC

PRESENTER: Larry Ascough, Associate Superintendent-Communications

Dallas ISD, 3700 Ross Avenue, Dallas, Tx 75204

Keeping the public informed about school policies, plans, programs, progress and problems, has always been a key responsibility of boards of education and school administrators. Unfortunately, during less trying times, communications with the public often received more lip service than action. But the challenges of recent years have made the need for getting the word out a necessity for survival.

In response to the need for communications with the public, school systems have initiated a variety of approaches--many traditional and some unique. The following five represent a diverse sampling of communications techniques currently in vogue:

Key communicators. An increasingly popular idea, the key communicator approach utilizes something found in every school system--the grapevine. The technique can be used on a district-wide basis or at the local school level. The idea is to develop a network of people normally tuned into the rumor mill. Through simple organization and frequent communication, such a structure can help you spread the word as well as provide rapid feedback.

Board meeting showcase. Regular meetings of the board usually have a built in audience, including the media and a variety of community leaders. With a little imagination and planning, your meetings can become informative and inspiring rather than routine and petty. Awards, recognition ceremonies, program reviews, exhibits, student performances and special guests are just a few of the possibilities. And if you don't have the time or the inclination for showcasing, at least take a look at how your meeting communicates (setting, agenda, public involvement, media arrangements, etc). Like it or not, it sends out messages each time you meet.

Principal's newsletter. Certainly not a new or earth shattering idea, but you'd be surprised how few are produced on a regular basis--and done well. The point is, however, parents like to hear from the school principal on a variety of subjects that impact their kids. Make sure your principals know what parents want to know about...and make sure they communicate in writing in an effective way and on a regular basis.

Working with realtors. If someone sells real estate within the boundaries of your school system, they also sell your school system--either up or down the river. The fact of the matter is, people ask realtors about the schools whether they have kids or not. So it's in your best interest to make friends with those in the business, and to keep them well informed about the merits of your schools. Keep the lines of communication open by assigning someone to serve as a contact.

Information booths. A growing number of school systems have made back-to-school information booths an annual tradition. The idea is simple. Recruit staff and volunteers to work information tables set up in grocery stores, shopping centers, and other sites where citizens congregate. And it doesn't have to be done once a year at the beginning of school.

At this point, you may or may not have picked up an idea you like. The fact is, there are literally thousands of techniques a school system can use to get the message out to the public. But because school districts and communities vary, communications approaches need to be tailored to meet your specific needs. If you're really interested in getting your message out, here are five thoughts to use in your planning process:

Use natural channels. You may not have to create new vehicles. Look at those that already exist and use them more effectively. Consider the media, organizations and clubs, the grapevine, publications produced by others, etc. You'll discover many out there...and they already have credibility.

Bring them in. The best way to tell someone is to show them. Beef up your efforts to get people in your schools. Use committees, volunteers, tours, evening programs, etc.

Meet them where they are. As in the above information booth idea, take your message to the people. Try meetings, events, libraries....

Speak their language. Keep it simple. Avoid jargon in writing and speaking. You're wasting your time and resources if they don't understand.

Talk about what they want to hear about. Set up feedback systems to determine your publics' interests. Make sure your communications efforts address what you've learned. For example, most parents are interested in curriculum and instruction. Are you telling them about what's happening in the classroom?

One final note. Public relations begin at home. Your most important public is your staff. After all, you must rely on them to inform the community. So don't forget them in your planning.

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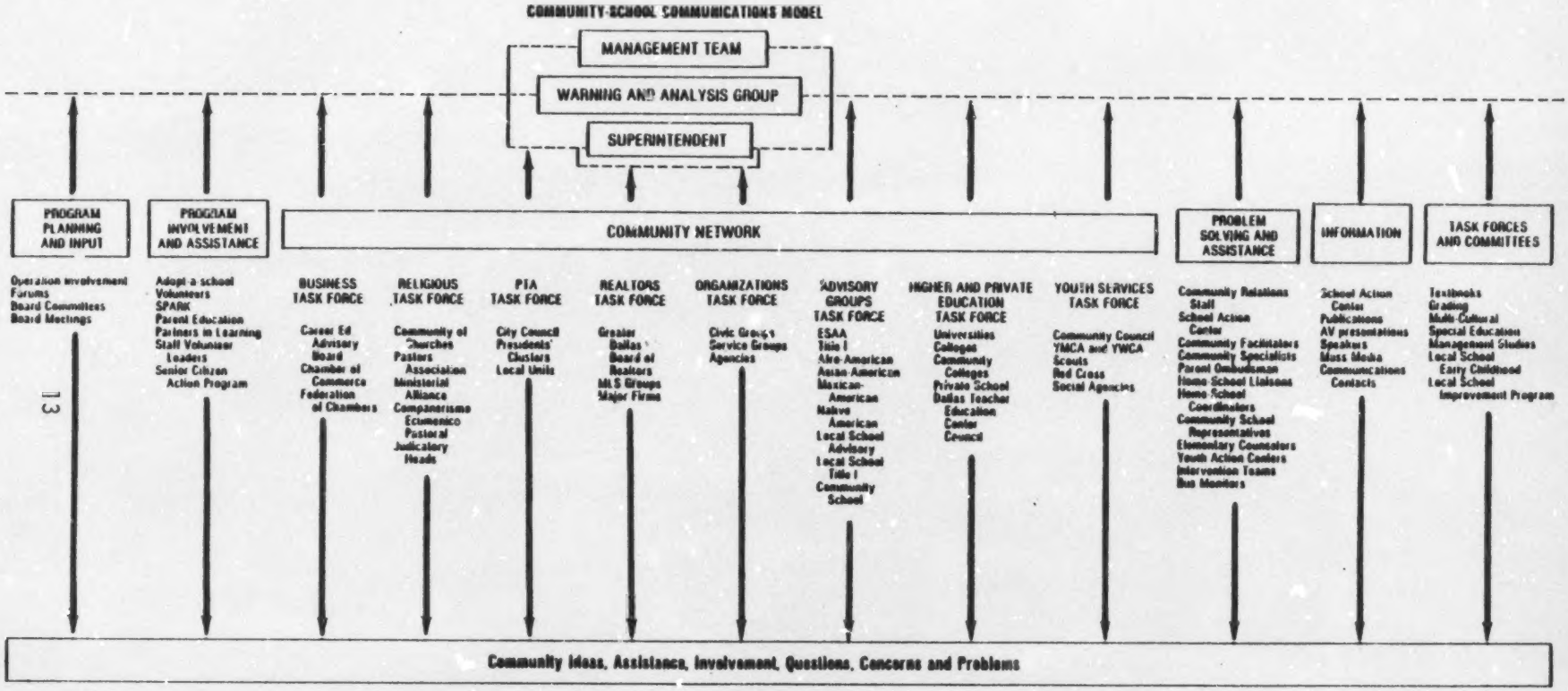

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PROJECT: KEY (COMMUNITY) COMMUNICATORS

School district crises requiring special communications efforts can range from employee labor negotiations and strikes, student disturbances, and school closures, to financial and budgetary problems, serious rumors, and any number of other dilemmas confronting public schools. Any crisis can occur when a district least expects it. Therefore communication to a district's publics must be swift and credible. A "network" of individuals within the community who can quickly disseminate accurate and supportive information regarding the schools to other members of the community can be formed in any school district, if the right people are chosen.

- A Key Communicator is an individual who is listened to in his or her circle and is believed by most of the members of the circle.
- Key Communicators must be generally supportive of the school district. Even during times of extreme tension, they will always be more supportive of the school district than of narrow, fragmented causes.
- Key Communicators can be PTA leaders, school volunteers, retail clerks, chamber of commerce officers, barbers, beauticians, dentists, doctors, lawyers, trade union leaders, prominent businessmen, industrialists, senior citizen leaders, and mass media officials. And, they can also be neighborhood leaders, housewives who are talkative in their block or building, little league coaches, and others who have the two essential traits.

FORMING KEY COMMUNICATOR GROUPS—Every school district superintendent, administrator, principal, support personnel supervisor, school board member, and school public relations person should have his/her own Key Communicator group.

- A superintendent's group could be comprised of a few compatible people in the community who face similar problems in private industry and other forms of government—plant managers, county commissioners, owners of businesses—and others responsible for large numbers of employees and large budgets.
- A principal should solicit for membership in his/her group those individuals in the neighborhood school community who are the most supportive of the district, and who are respected by their neighbors.
- School PR people should invite media representatives and private industry PR people to make up a group. A school transportation supervisor could utilize private bus company managers and the food services coordinator could seek the counsel of restaurant and institutional food service supervisors.

Compile the names and addresses of all Key Communicators for a master district-wide mailing list. Each should receive a regular, factual publication of the official actions of the district. Give them enough information so they'll never say: "You never tell us anything about what's going on with the district."

Each group should have informal, occasional meetings. Listen to their suggestions, share problems, heed their good ideas. They'll feel that they're an important part of their local public education system. And, you'll have a "network" of supportive and understanding people.

PREPARED BY: Gordon Shaw, public relations consultant, Portland, Oregon.

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PR RESOURCE TIPS

PROJECT: USING YOUR BOARD MEETINGS AS A SHOWCASE

Members of local school boards often express disappointment with the attendance of public and press at board meetings. Often the routine and even the petty seem to dominate the meetings, so that the board has little time to seek an overview of the district or to consider basic educational concerns and issues. Perhaps it is time that board and administration together planned meetings that are more intellectually challenging, interesting and satisfying to all participants. Properly managed, these sessions need only take 30 minutes.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS AND EVENTS TO CONSIDER:

- Awards such as trophies, plaques and certificates presented to students for academic, athletic or other achievements.
- Staff members who have made outstanding contributions or achievements presented with certificates of commendation.
- Anniversaries and retirements of staff acknowledged with certificates—reception after meeting.
- Staff presentations on major educational issues or status reports on programs in the schools.
- All persons who have volunteered their services during the school year honored at a meeting with certificates of appreciation.
- Student presentations and performance reports. Exhibits of student work set up for meeting. Responsible students invited and introduced.
- Senior citizens invited to a board meeting—perhaps one which features adult education offerings available for them.
- Special reports prepared by PTA, band parents organization, booster club or departments of the district such as librarians or science teachers.

GUIDELINES:

- Standards for these programs should be set high at the outset.
- The public should be encouraged to participate. Even if your schedule will allow only a 30-minute presentation, ten minutes should be set aside for questions and comments.
- Involve as many students and staff members as possible.
- Always invite the relatives and friends of participants as well as representatives of community organizations that might be interested in the topic.
- Always invite the staff advisor, coach or teacher to introduce the student and explain the award or program.
- Publicize programs and events thoroughly in advance and seek coverage whenever possible by the media—press, radio, TV, and cable TV.
  Invite local organizations (League of Women Voters, chamber of commerce, etc.) to send a regular representative to your board meetings. Provide these representatives with advance materials on your meetings.

PREPARED BY: Lenore Greenberg, director of communication, New Jersey School Boards Association, Trenton, New Jersey.

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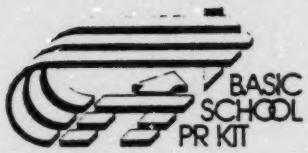

PR RESOURCE TIPS

PROJECT: A PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER FOR PARENTS

Keep the newsletter short and simple. An 8 1/2" x 11" sheet printed on one or two sides is sufficient. Make it attractive, neat, well-organized, accurate and PUBLISH ON SCHEDULE--not whenever the "spirit moves."

- Writing--Use simple words, short sentences, short paragraphs and action verbs. Avoid like the plague all educational jargon or gobbledygook. Tell your readers what they want to know, what they need to know, and in simple straight-forward language.
- ART--If you can use photographs use sharp, clear photos shot in black and white--photos that HELP to tell the story that education in your school is exciting, enjoyable and successful. If you can't use photographs try clip art (drawings clipped out of a "clip book").

SPECIAL TIPS FOR TYPEWRITTEN NEWSLETTERS:

- Use generous margins, up to about 7/8 of an inch.
- Single space the story itself and double space between the paragraphs.
- Have no paragraph longer than eight lines.
- Double space between a headline and the story.
- Triple space between the end of one story and the headline of the next story.
- Don't handletter headlines--use art transfer type available at any good art supply store.
- Use a pica typewriter. Don't use italics (except possibly for short captions), or script type.

CONTENT--PARENTS WANT TO KNOW:

- How their child is doing.
- What's taught and how.
- Special services.
- Policies--as they pertain to their child.
- How the money is spent.

DISTRIBUTION--Publications sent home with students above the fifth grade probably won't get there. Mail it--with a bulk mailing permit, costs are not excessive. Ask a parent group or PTA to help in defraying mailing costs. Set up special delivery programs with Girl Scout/Boy Scout troops or clubs in the school.

GET FEEDBACK--Don't be afraid to say "We are working hard to improve_____." Enclose a tear-off coupon and/or send-back questionnaire suggesting: "I would like to know more about _____." Make a few random calls after each publication is distributed to find out if parents have received a copy and what they think.

PREPARED BY: Kenneth J. Gelms, Supervisor of Information, Beverly Hills (Calif.) Unified School District.

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PR RESOURCE TIPS

PROJECT: WORKING WITH REALTORS

What are the local schools like? What school will my child attend? These most frequently asked questions of realtors in your community can and often do make or break new residents' attitudes about "your schools" before you have sent them that first newsletter or invited them to that first program. Real estate agents and sales personnel properly informed and with a friendly, cooperative relationship established through personal contact, can be the school district's leading booster.

THESE IDEAS WORK:

- Hold a workshop for real estate brokers and salespeople to explain the district's programs, procedures and policies. Have staff members discuss busing, school finance, attendance zones, psychological services, guidance counseling, curriculum, extra curricular programs and provide an opportunity for a question and answer period.
- Plan a special breakfast or luncheon for realtors and salespeople with school administrators, members of the board of education and key staff. Include a BUS TOUR of the district--with stop-offs at an elementary, junior and senior high where they can see a school in action. (Select broadly representative schools--not just your "show-case" ones.)
- Develop a packet of materials for realtors and distribute them at the workshop or luncheon/bus tour and take them to those who did not attend. These packets should include:
  - readable maps and/or descriptions of school attendance areas
  - school policies on attendance
  - entrance age requirements
  - transportation policies
  - suggestions for parents moving into the school district; how to handle transfer of records and enrolling in the district
  - school calendar for the current year
  - pre-schools in the area (a special service)
  - information about how to get additional school information--superintendent's name, board of education meetings, etc.
  - if possible, pictures of each school with names, addresses and phone

- Develop an information brochure, fact sheet for prospective new residents for realtors to distribute. (Such a brochure should contain much of the information suggested for the packet or handbook.)
- Contact the board of realtors' in your area and ask if you can attend a meeting and suggest a speaker from the district.
- Maintain your contacts with realtors. Invite them to call you with questions and/or suggestions and utilize them as valuable feedback resources. Ask: "What questions are you most frequently asked about our schools?"

PREPARED BY: Florence Brown, public information officer, Thompson School District, Loveland, Colorado

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PROJECT: THE SHOPPING CENTER SCHOOL INFORMATION BOOTH

For the past eight years, the Kansas City (Kan.) Public School District has made a special effort to inform patrons about the opening of school. The annual event has become a most enjoyable and valuable activity for both school administrators and area residents.

OBJECTIVES:

- To inform the public about school programs, textbooks, new equipment, and school calendar
- To answer any questions patrons may have concerning the Kansas City Public Schools
- To inform the public about Senior Citizen Activity Passes and to make the passes available to eligible persons
- To listen to concerns expressed by members of the community
- To make new acquaintances and renew old acquaintances

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

- Scheduled approximately two weeks before opening of schools
- Set up in a location for easy access to shoppers
- Manned for one week by both elementary and secondary school principals and assistant principals working two-hour shifts

PLANNING:

- "Facts" brochure designed and printed
- Shopping center contacted to schedule time (preferably to coordinate with business back-to-school sales) and to arrange for tables, display boards and telephone
- Principals and assistant principals sent letters assigning them dates and times to work at booth
- Films previewed and new textbooks selected for display
- Arrangements made with businesses in mall for storage of equipment at night
- Information signs and posters prepared
- Reminder calls made to principals
- Thank you notes sent to all persons involved at end of week

MATERIALS:

- "Facts" brochure, board meeting brochure
- New textbooks and workbooks
- Title I materials (tape player, head-set, workbooks)
- Posters, any "eye-catching" artwork by students, etc.
- 16mm projector and instructional films
- School boundary maps
- Supply lists for grades K-6
- Immunization forms
- Senior citizen materials
- Fasteners (tape, stapler, etc.)
- Telephone
- Area Vocational Technical School materials

The Back-to-School Information Booth has become a valuable public relations activity. It brings together school administrators and area patrons on neutral ground.

PREPARED BY: Bill D. Todd, principal, Washington High School, Kansas City, Kansas

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Working with the Media

Rodney Davis' topic addressed three major areas of mass media: radio, television, and newspapers. He pointed out that there is often a sense of distrust between educators and reporters. Reporters expect to be able to go out to a school when something happens--directly to the principal. Often the principal doesn't know what to say. The administration, however, usually wants each principal to handle his/her own PR. If the principal doesn't talk to the reporter, the reporter will often turn to a secondary source. Therefore, each principal should have his/her own PR plan.

The superintendent should set the tone for the school district working with the media. Principals then follow that pattern. Administrators should respond promptly to reporters' calls.

Davis distributed a hand-out, "Public Information Program. Public's Right to Know," which synthesizes the Dallas I.S.D. board policy dealing with PR. This hand-out follows.

Davis presented a short list of do's and dont's for working with the media:

- do be available to reporters and the public
- do compliment reporters when they do a good job
- don't ever make comments which are "off the record"
- do plan for recurring events that will be covered by the media--such as testing results and budget decisions
- do hold news briefings from time to time
- do compile "a press review"--copies of all newspaper articles compiled into a document
- do send news tips to the assignment editor at the paper

PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM:
SCHOOL-SPONSORED INFORMATION MEDIA

GBB
(LOCAL)

PUBLICATIONS, BROADCASTS, AND OTHER MEDIA PRESENTATIONS

The District shall produce informational bulletins, pamphlets, publications, broadcasts, and other media as a part of a continuous public information service to promote understanding of the schools, to promote educational improvement, and to assist in building staff morale.

All publications approved and issued by a local school shall be part of the instructional program. All matters pertaining to the organization, issuance, sale, and any other publication procedure shall be the responsibility of the principal of the school from which the publication is issued.

ISSUED DATE:

ADOPTED: APR 23 1981

AMENDED:

RELATED POLICIES:

20

NEWS RELEASES	The General Superintendent has delegated the responsibility for news releases to the associate superintendent for communications. News releases concerning local school events shall be the responsibility of principals or their designees, and all releases shall be cleared through the principal's office.
COVERAGE OF SCHOOL EVENTS	Every effort shall be made to cooperate with news media to ensure complete and accurate coverage of school events. As the principal is responsible for the approval and appropriate coordination of interviews and other coverage within individual schools, the news media shall report to the principal's office upon arrival at the school. The principal shall devise a plan for press personnel covering emergency situations, based on information provided by the information services department. The staff of the District's information services department shall be available to assist both principals and the news media in such activities.
MAGAZINE OR OTHER ARTICLES	All articles authored by District personnel concerning school programs or using the title of the author as an employee must be cleared by the communications department if the employee appears to be representing the District as a whole.
INTERVIEWS	All interviews in schools must be approved by the principal.

The public shall be fully and promptly informed concerning plans, activities, and needs of the District. Information shall be made available for the press and the public.

COVERAGE OF BOARD MEETINGS

Every effort shall be made to cooperate with news media to ensure complete and accurate coverage of all Board meetings.

APPEARANCES, INTERVIEWS, AND PERFORMANCES

The District encourages news media coverage of all school activities and makes the principal responsible for the approval and appropriate coordination of interviews and other coverage within individual schools. Principals shall cooperate when reasonable requests are made by bona fide news media representatives, and reporters are expected to cooperate with principals in making sure the educational process is not disturbed or disrupted by news coverage. The District's information services department shall be available to assist both principals and the press in such activities.

SCHOOL NEWS RELEASES

The General Superintendent shall have the authority to issue news releases that have citywide significance regarding the schools.

ISSUED DATE:

ADOPTED: APR 23 1991

AMENDED:

RELATED POLICIES:

Involving Total Staff for Good PR

In her small group session, Bonnie Ellison suggested that the full staff of a district might be informally trained in PR. This might come about initially by simply explaining the district's policy on public relations and communications. Explaining this policy to the staff is an excellent way to begin to focus on the fact that everyone is a PR person for the district.

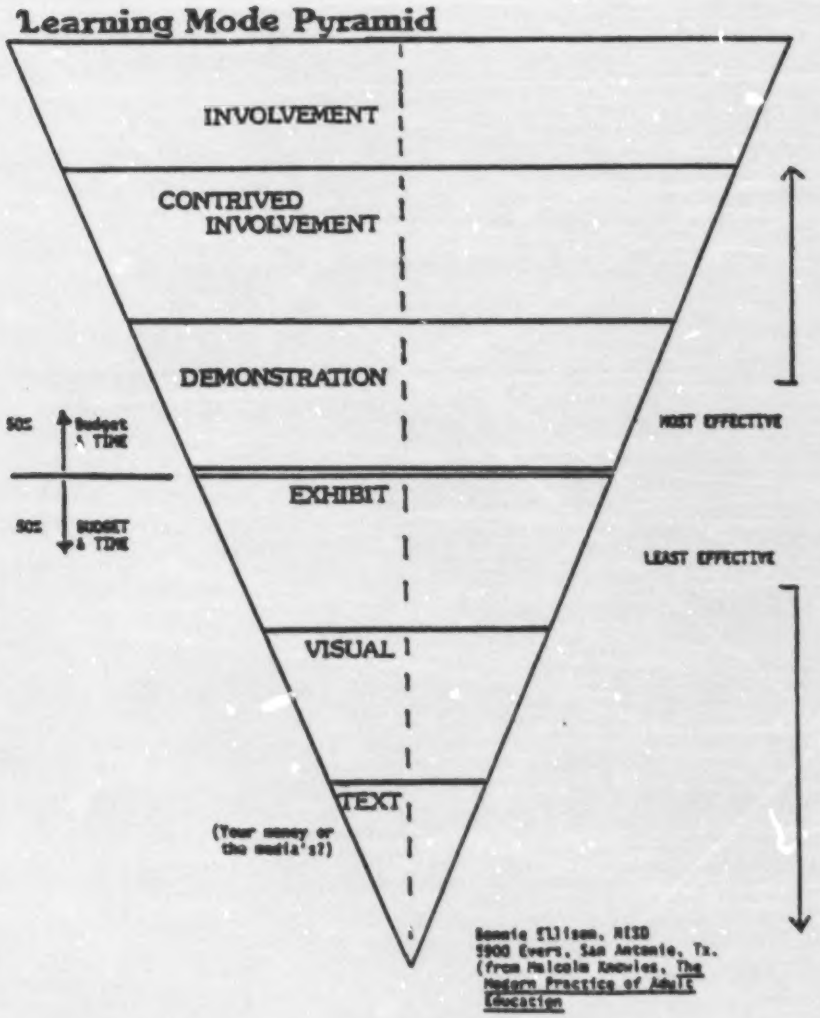
The public information officer in a district must perceive herself/himself as a teacher--teaching the publics what they want and need to know. The district PR person must also be the teacher of the staff. The teachers and administrators are one of the many "publics."

Ellison passed out several handouts to give examples of what Northside I.S.D. is doing about PR. These include 1) an appreciation certificate, 2) the Best Ideas of 1979-80, 3) an example of a "personalized" rather than "depersonalized" memo displaying Northside's active effort to involve staff in all sorts of decision-making, 4) a crisis planning tip sheet, and 5) a humorous approach to management techniques.

Also discussed were some ideas for eliciting suggestions, ideas, questions, and concerns from the public. One of these was a large postcard which asked people to give the school feedback on issues. It simply read "What's going on (when, where, how, why, who)..." and provided space for them to respond. They were then asked to mail it to News Editors or send it to the Public Information Office of the district. The items were to be of interest to any or all aspects of the media.

Another postcard was to be used by anyone in the district to thank reporters for good coverage. It showed a reporter on the front of the card and had "Thanks for the Coverage" on the back with space for writing a brief message.

Lastly, Ellison also discussed the Learning Mode Pyramid. She suggested that 1% of the total district's budget should be set aside for PR. The pyramid shows how the goal for good public relations is community involvement.



It's people like Laird P. Meadows
who make SanAntonio
such a nice place to live!

with appreciation from the City Council May 12, 1972

Lila Cockrell

THE BEST IDEAS OF 1979-80

from Public Information Office, Northside ISD, San Antonio, Tx. Bonnie Ellison

1. Secretary's stylebook, Northside Style, backed up workshops for anyone writing about the District, not just secretaries. Gave Information Office a way to insist on things (like using both names for Carlos Coon School instead of saying Coon School) best said.

   Designed with humor to make rules easier to swallow. Designed odd-size and bright cover on purpose so people could find it quickly on their desks.

   Expected to actually be more valuable as a workshop tool than as a hand-out. Propose to print subsequent (and different) editions annually until we have a usable set.

2. Necessary to Northside T-shirts give seldom-recognized employees (like the switchboard operator, right) a feeling of value to the District. So far, we have no guidelines for distribution in writing; being guided, instead, by common sense and need of the moment.

3. Pre-screening photographs for printing or photo-copying saves money paid to printers. Quality is a cut above Xerox (compare pre-screened photo, left, with photo above. This one is pre-screened by placing dot screen 35 millimeter negative over regular negative and enlarging both. Can also be done with dot screen placed over paper on enlarger. Polaroid prints from pack film can also be pre-screened with camera attachment. Different patterns can be creatively produced with stuff like nylon stockings.

NORTHSIDE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

5900 EVERS ROAD SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78238 681-0330

TO: COLD DRINK LOVERS

FROM: PURCHASING (Doris) dc

DATE: July 23, 1981

SUBJECT: NEW DRINK MACHINE

There is a possibility that an additional canned drink machine will be placed in our snack bar. In order for us to determine whether or not there is sufficient demand for one, please complete the following survey and return to me. (Please check questions that apply to you.)

1. I don't like cold drinks. Leave me alone. _____

2. I am satisfied with the flavors available in the existing machine. I just wish it worked. _____

3. I would like for the following flavors to be available: (Please choose 3. Put a "1" by your most favorite drink; a "2" by your second most favorite; and a "3" by your third most favorite.)

   Dr. Pepper_____ Sugar Free Dr. Pepper_____ Orange Crush_____

   Grape Crush_____ Strawberry Crush_____ Hires Root Beer_____

   Country Time Lemonade_____ Hawaiian Punch_____

The drinks will be in cans and will sell for 40 cents.

You may need to make additional survey sheets for your office, or just indicate preferences on a plain sheet of paper. If you like, just call on extension 271 and I will record your preferences.

USE KEY STAFF and community communicators to dispel rumors.

CONTROL the grapevine. Check rumors at the source.

MAINTAIN AN ATMOSPHERE OF OPENNESS AND TRUST. Be honest about mistakes. Provide plans for correcting weaknesses. Enlist aid. Fill requests for comments, interviews, photos, statistics. The approach of a public servant (educator) is "We can use all the help we can get to solve this problem--together."

SWIFTLY supply believable information. Expect "officials" not to be believed, which is why a key communicators meeting works. Community or staff people are the ones reporters talk to--the ones people believe--the ones "close" to the problem.

SET UP AVENUES OF COMMUNICATION before you see the likelihood of using them. Reap benefits of having already developed a cooperative relationship with the media over the long term.

DISCUSS WITH STAFF their role in crisis situations. Identify a line of spokespersons--an order of who will speak when first spokesperson is not abailable. Outline and assign administrative duties.

PUT STUDENTS OFF the phones for the duration of the crisis.

DON'T SAY WHAT YOU THINK--only what you <u>know</u> to be true.

REIN IN EMOTIONAL involvement--yours--and be aware of its predominance in others.

PROVIDE A PRESS ROOM (crisis communication center). Locate a room with phones separate from office of person in charge (principal's office) but near to the scene of the crisis. Assign a staff member to remain there who knows what's going on and is in touch with both principal and media. (NISD Public Information staff can help here.)

TAKE INITIATIVE with media where possible. You're better off going to them than vice-versa--sometimes.

BE WILLING TO SHARE information, but don't take a definite stand when all the facts aren't in. Emphasize what is NOT yet known as well as what is known. (see 8 above)

EMPHASIZE WITH MEDIA AND STAFF YOUR UNDERSTANDING of their ability to help handle the crisis by informing them. From this you can inject your opinion on why some things will not be helpful. Thank them for their cooperation and resist rapping publicly the ones who weren't helpful.

ANNOUNCE A SCHEDULE of times when district spokespersons will meet the media--on the hour, on the half hour--but if you get new information they're seeking, don't wait until schedules time to provide it.

IF IT BECOMES NECESSARY to set ground rules limiting reporter access to the scene, enforce them without favoritism. Expect efforts to circumvent the rules will succeed--a good argument for not attempting to limit access in the first place.

AVOID USING A FULL-BLOWN press conference. A few reporters at a time informally is the way they prefer it and the part they will believe anyway.

MAKE SURE KEY INTERNAL STAFF MEMBERS have telephone numbers with unlisted phone numbers, private lines, etc.

USE A P.A. SYSTEM or bullhorn to address crowds--have one available. Provide administrators radio communication equipment.

REMEMBER ANYTHING YOU SAY WILL BE FOR THE RECORD. Phone conversations will probably be taped--a good idea, when possible, to also tape from your end.

EXPLAIN TO REPORTERS WHY you don't provide certain information (because of privacy rights of anyone involved, hinder investigations., etc.)

IF A REPORTER BECOMES A PROBLEM, explain why you are having trouble communicating. (I can't answer that now but if you'll let me get back to you in 30 minutes, I can.)

CONSIDER USE OF ALL CONCEIVABLE communication tools: telephone trees, bulletins, hot line phones, paid advertising, posted notices, district-wide mail-outs.

DECISIONS NOT TO COOPERATE with the media should only be made as a last resort--and then, but the superintendent. Since public education is public sector, non-cooperation would be rare indeed.

Management By flip Of a coin

1 If it's been six months since your last story on reading or math, it's been too long.

2 If you buy envelopes on sale, it's because the post office has slapped a surcharge on that size.

3 But odd sale paper forces you to use more creativity in your designs.

4 If you tape notes and memos on your wall, the paint will fall off.

5 And getting the taxpayers to approve money to paint administrative offices is a pipe dream nobody will smoke.

6 If you have a meeting so everyone will hear the same thing, somebody will hear something different.

7 If you decide at the water fountain, it'll be set in stone.

8 If you try to decide at the meeting, it'll be left open 'til the next meeting--which will never happen.

9 If you transfer calls, you'll make enemies and never know what's being said.

10 If you stick with kid art on all publications, the big-time pro artists will call to find out who illustrated them. If they have to ask, it's because you failed to credit the kid. If you send the kid's mom one copy, she'll call and ask for two more. If you send the kid's mom two dozen copies, she'll call and ask for two dozen more. If you don't send the kid's mom any, you've missed a pr opportunity and lost a friend.

11 If you quote the superintendent and board members word for word, they'll sound like idiots most of the time.

12 If you enter a dozen people in any contest, one of them will win.

13 If you talk too much, nobody will hear you. If you don't talk enough, others will and everyone will hear them.

14 If you do it that way because you've always done it that way, you're doing it for a dumb reason.

15 If you're scared in a television interview, SMILE. It works every time.

16 If you find out the answers for people and CALL RIGHT BACK, you'll be indispensable.

17 If you tell the printer it's camera-ready, it means he's responsible for hiring a graphic artist.

18 If you use and allow use of acronyms, you will ultimately wind up with an obscene one.

19 If you shoot only with available light, it will not matter if you have film in the camera.

20 But the flash won't distract the kids and you'll get fewer people with victory signs over their heads.

21 If you push film to accommodate for available light only, you won't be able to get the grain out.

22 But keep looking. Some photo processors are grainier than others.

23 If you worry you'll get sued, you will. If you don't worry, you'll rarely get sued.

24 If you don't stay "conversational" in interviews, you'll pitch your voice up and sound scared.

25 In education, what people are up on, they are not likely to be down on.

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February, 1982

26 If you don't take irate calls FAST, the caller will tell someone else the crud.

27 Since you can never cap a tirade with enough steam behind it, better to let it blow off on you.

28 If you think your boss wants to know what you're doing, you're right.

29 If you think others want to know what you're doing, you're only half right.

30 If others don't know what you're doing, you're not doing anything worthwhile.

31 If you're lonely, you probably haven't made friends with yourself yet.

32 If you haven't awarded a preferred parking space as a prize, you should.

33 If you don't know what's happening in school, you're eating lunch with the same people too often.

34 If you print the following student's poem:
Thank God for dirty dishes.
They have a tale to tell.
While other folks go hungry
We're eating very well.
With home, health, happiness,
We shouldn't want to fuss.
For by this stack of evidence,
God's been very good to us.
Someone will say you're teaching creationism. Agree with them or buy paper plates.

35 If you don't know how many you need to print, you probably don't need to print it.

36 If you think nobody reads TSB, ask somebody whose name is in it how many letters they received.

37 If you think it costs too much, you haven't figured out how to do the same thing cheap.

38 If you haven't had a good idea in the shower lately, take baths. And vice versa. If you're writing a letter to your mom, you are recharging your creative batteries. If your creative batteries need recharging, it's been too long since your last TSPRA Workshop.

39 If someone at coffee is saying how a department should be run, you can be sure no one from that department is in the coffee shop... which is why you never know how others think your department should be run.

40 If you sing Christmas carols at school, someone will say you're anti-semitic.

41 If you allow U.S.S.R (Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading), someone will say you're communist.

42 If you listen to what everyone says, you'll secure support for schools.

43 If you make policies based on what everyone says, you'll have policies no one can live with.

44 If you wonder what you get for TSPRA/NSPRA dues, try measuring the level of professionalism it supports.

45 If you have all meetings in the same place, you're discriminating against places where you don't meet.

46 To prove how valuable news coverage is, put the advertising space price on it.

Copy by Bonnie Ellison, Northside Information Director, San Antonio.
Art by Mordillo.

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Surveying Your Community

Larry Ascough emphasized that it's important to know what the community is thinking. Good public relations is preventive maintenance. Public relations personnel should encourage, analyze, and use feedback from the community.

In surveying the community, educators must talk with people--not at them. Administrators must make certain that they are considering the ideas of all segments of the community. The feedback process doesn't just happen. It takes work. Good two-way communications will help administrators head off problems at an early stage of development--before they reach the crisis stage.

Don't wait until after a crisis to find out what went wrong. Some methods for keeping the feedback coming include advisory committees from each audience--students, faculty, citizens; selecting key communicators, people who talk with many other people; listening to what people in service groups are saying; and inviting taxpayers to have lunch at the school with the principal. Another good way of getting an idea about the concerns of the community is to have the switchboard operator keep a list of common questions. If it is discovered that a great many people share a common concern, it's time to do a story on that topic for the media or the newsletter. Reading church bulletins and working with the clergy will frequently help administrators identify problems and concerns before they surface.

Ascough made many suggestions for conducting a community survey. Some opinion polling should be done regularly, at least annually. People's opinions change--and they change more frequently than is often recognized. When conducting an opinion poll, those involved must feel that there is a purpose for it--that there are specific plans for tabulating, reporting and acting upon results. Many times a community survey fails to get feedback from one "public" which is very directly involved in the system: the students. Don't overlook them.

Polling may be done by self-completion questionnaires or by interview questionnaires. In either case the questionnaire should not be so long or complex that it places a burden on the respondents. Questions should be simple and direct. The language is important and should help eliminate vague responses. Questions which require a lengthy written response should be avoided or limited as they are difficult to tabulate. Questions should be carefully constructed, and categories that will classify the respondents must be chosen with care. Formal survey questionnaires can be supplemented with the district's newsletter or a special interest newsletter, which from time to time may ask questions of its readers.

The district should make it as easy as possible for the respondent to return these with self-addressed, stamped envelopes. Be explicit in the instructions for completing and returning the questionnaire. Ascough suggested participants read School Communications: Ideas that Work, by Don Bagin, et al., (Woodstown, New Jersey: Communicaid Inc., 1972.) Pages 34-41 are from Bagin's book.

CHAPTER

3

18 *Ways To Find Out What Your Community Is Thinking*

Ask any school administrator or board member about his school's communications efforts. Chances are you'll hear about his news releases and newsletters or other written, one-way communication tools. Seldom will the school official talk about the ways he gets feedback — the methods he uses to determine what the public is thinking about the schools.

Ask any communications expert about effective communication. He'll emphasize the importance of constant feedback and two-way communication. Thus, the schoolman who wants to communicate must identify his audiences and know how to listen to them. This is so vital to the over-all communications program that ideally it should precede all other phases.

If the administrator starts with a sound effort to determine what the community thinks about the schools and what the community wants to know, he will be able to plan the communications program with specific goals in mind. He would know just what kinds of information to offer.

Talking With, Not At

Educators often talk at people instead of with them. When attempting to get feedback, the administrator must make sure he's considering the ideas of all segments of the community. Too often the educator surrounds himself with people who share his philosophy, ideas and Scotch. Often he conscientiously feels he has

his finger on the community's pulse because of his contacts with this immediate circle of acquaintances. However, the feedback from this select group is hardly indicative of what other segments of the community are thinking.

The administrator who rationalizes his feedback network by saying he talks with associates does himself and his district a disservice. So does the administrator who claims that an open-door policy and open board meetings allow everyone a chance to talk.

Like other parts of a communications program, the feedback process won't just happen. It takes effort. But the effort will result in the administrator's saving himself plenty of time and trouble. For instance, a good two-way communications flow will enable the administrator to identify problems while they are still in the embryonic stages — before they grow to crises. A sound feedback system will alert the administrator that the community will accept one idea but will vehemently reject another, unless more explanation is forthcoming.

Survey Before the Crisis

Don't wait until after a crisis to find out what went wrong. Don't take a survey after a bond issue defeat to determine areas of possible misunderstanding. Build into your system's ongoing communications program a constant two-way flow of information, questions, constructive criticisms, and suggestions. Your district will be better for it.

Some specific suggestions for obtaining feedback follow:

- Establish advisory committees. Have one from each audience. For instance, set up an advisory committee of students, one of faculty, and another of lay citizens. Committee members, by feeling they are an integral part of the school, will be quick to apprise you of their group's thinking on a possible problem. The groups also serve as sounding boards for ideas.

  Properly selected groups, if representative of the community, can provide a constant source of information about what the community at large is thinking about the schools. (See Chapter 6 for more information on advisory groups.)

- Select key communicators. These are the people at the top of the communications pyramid in a community. Some may be professional people. Others may be bartenders, beauticians, barbers — people who talk with many other people. Others might be retired

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people who want to remain active in the community; thus, they spend many minutes talking with others about community topics.

Invite these people in groups of 6 to 12 to meet with the chief school administrator. It helps if he takes the time to make the calls himself. The number of people in each district's group will vary according to the size of the community. If these people agree to serve as key communicators, they will be quick to let the superintendent know if the community is rumbling about some school concern. It's a good feeling for a barber, when asked a question about the schools, to say: "I'll call the superintendent and find out; I had lunch with him the other day." This kind of group spreads a feeling of "the schools are ours" that gains community support for the schools.

This group must be kept informed at all times of problems as well as of successes. One school district, Central Bucks, in Doylestown, Pa., prepares a special publication, *Facets*, to distribute to this group when a rumor is spreading.

• Invite taxpayers to lunch. Each principal might invite groups of six or eight taxpayers to lunch a couple of times a week. In an informal atmosphere, eating cafeteria food, the taxpayers can discuss school matters. This encourages those who met with the principal to call him the next time a question arises rather than spread misinformation that sometimes leads to severe problems.

• Listen to what's said at meetings of service groups. People who belong to these organizations often talk with many others in the community. It's a good idea to have a school administrator join these groups, if for no other reason than to know what the groups' concerns about the school are.

• Distribute wallet-size calendars to residents. In addition to key school dates and general information about the schools, include a phone number to be called for information or to check a rumor. This number should be answered 24 hours a day and on holidays by an answering service. Some administrator (perhaps on a rotating basis) should be available when necessary to respond to crisis calls.

• Get peoples' ideas on tape. Provide tape recorders throughout school buildings during events such as parent conferences and Back-to-School Night and school activities such as basketball games and plays. Their availability and use should be explained, encouraging people to make suggestions for the improvement of the school. Questions might also be asked this way by people who

don't feel comfortable with the written word. It also guarantees anonymity for those who desire it.

• Listen to local radio call-in shows. Often one crank call won't mean much, but a series of calls showing concern about a topic will alert the administrator that some explanation or action is required.

• Include a question session at public meetings. By formally establishing such a procedure, the administrator will demonstrate that he encourages questions and suggestions. At the same time, he will communicate a climate that says "We want to do a better job; if you have an idea, share it."

• Offer guidance and administrative services at night occasionally. Some people who would lose a day's work if they came during the day will appreciate the opportunity to talk with you at their convenience. Even if only a few people use the service, this approach indicates that the school is trying to serve the public.

• Establish a community resource file. By bringing people to the schools to speak to classes or assemblies, you involve them in "their school." They will be quick to let officials know about a festering problem if they feel the school cares about them enough to ask them to share their talents. Maintaining such a file is helpful to teachers at all grade levels.

• Have the switchboard operator keep a list of common questions. If a large number of people call about one topic, it's time to do a story on that topic for the media or for the newsletter.

• Read church bulletins and work with the local clergy. They can frequently identify community concerns before they surface. Keep these people well informed at all times.

• Establish a speakers' bureau. By offering free speakers as a service, the district engenders solid support with local organizations. Speakers can be encouraged to report questions to the administration for answering.

• Include questionnaires in newsletters sent to the public. Even though many people will not return the questionnaires, the ones who do will provide another insight into what some people are thinking.

• Note questions asked by reporters at news conferences and after board meetings. These questions represent the thinking of not only the reporters but community residents.

• Be candid with town officials and civic leaders. In turn, these people will express what is concerning them and their groups. This kind of information can be extremely valuable.

• Distribute golden age cards to residents over 60 or 65. These cards allow residents to attend free such school activities as sports events and plays. When giving each person his card, the school official might discuss the concerns the golden-ager has about the schools and encourage him to call the schools with questions if he has any.

• Have an open forum once a month. Invite students, parents, administrators, teachers and taxpayers. Encourage people to come up with questions that will lead to answers that make the schools better. Set the ground rules clearly and in writing so the meetings don't become ax-grinding arenas for special interest groups seeking to gain publicity. Perhaps for openers, start this program with just students. Then, if feasible, expand it. Be ready for criticism; if you can't stand someone telling you that the school isn't doing its job in some area, don't try this. Make sure all suggestions are properly noted and that the person making the suggestion is told officially what happened to it.

CHAPTER **4**

Conducting a Community Survey

A key technique for obtaining feedback is opinion polling. Basically, there are two forms of opinion polling:

1. questionnaires that respondents complete themselves and return, and
2. questionnaires that are completed by persons who personally interview respondents.

Remember These Tips

Whether your district chooses one form or the other, it should keep these important points in mind:

- Opinion polling should not be a "once in a while when we think of it" proposition. Opinion polling in some form, even on a small scale, should be conducted regularly. The schedule should be related to your district's particular plans, needs, problems, staff, population and over-all communications program. But there should be some important polling done at least annually to keep abreast of the community's thinking. Community representatives can help school officials decide which topics to select.

- Opinion polling will be a bust — or, worse, an insult to those polled — if there are no specific plans for tabulating, reporting and acting upon results. If, for example, your district polls residents and teachers for their opinions about year-round operation of the

schools, they should receive a report on the results. The responses either should prompt the board/administration to undertake intensive studies of year-round operation of the schools or should cause them to postpone consideration indefinitely for lack of interest or open hostility.

• Opinion polling should not be limited to just parents or just the public. Certain polls should be designed just for the public, but polling also should be employed with faculty and secondary-school students.

• Questionnaires should not be so complex and long that they place a burden on the respondents — whether they are replying by mail or to an interviewer. One of the reasons for conducting surveys on a regular basis is to avoid having to lump everything together. Instead of one mammoth survey every five years that asks people to give their opinion about every aspect of school life, conduct one poll every year that elicits opinion about a specific aspect of school life.

• Questions should be simple and direct. The language is very important. This is a bad question: "What do you think of middle schools?" The question is vague and invites a vague response. A better question would be: "Do you favor grouping children of grades 5 to 8 in one school? 'Yes,' 'No,' or 'No Opinion.' "

• Questions should not require a written response — they are difficult to tabulate, requiring the tabulators to create a number of general response categories. Questions requiring a "Yes" or "No" answer are much easier to tabulate.

• Questions should be carefully constructed, and categories that will classify the respondents must be chosen with care. For example, polls of the public might ask respondents to indicate such things as the following: sex, age bracket, income level, race, religion, education level, occupation, section of the district, length of residence, and whether home is owned or rented. It may not be necessary to include all of those categories in all polls. The categories chosen will depend in large measure on the subjects of the survey, who is surveyed, and the purposes to which the results will be put.

• An announcement should be made at least once before the polling begins to alert those who are to be polled. If it is a public poll, there should be at least one announcement in the newsletter and local news media. If it is a poll of faculty or students, an announcement should be made at general meetings or in some other appropriate fashion. The announcements should advise the audience to be polled of the exact nature of the poll, why it is being conducted, when it will be conducted, and how it will be done.

communicating person to person

Self-Completion Questionnaire

The most common technique for eliciting opinion used by the schools is the questionnaire sent to persons who complete it themselves and return it to the sender. Usually the questionnaire is sent to all residents, all teachers, or all students.

It is nearly impossible to conduct a scientific sampling of opinion through a self-completion questionnaire. There is no guarantee that those who must respond to make it scientifically accurate will in fact complete and return the questionnaire.

Almost any response to a survey is of some benefit. But school officials should place decreasing reliance on the responses as fewer persons respond. For instance, a 75 per cent response usually is more indicative of the genuine opinions of the audience polled than a 25 per cent response.

When using the self-completion questionnaire, note the number of responses in different categories used to classify respondents. For example, if approximately 60 per cent of the population is Roman Catholic and less than 10 per cent of the respondents have indicated they are Roman Catholic, it would be safe to say that there is no reliable reading on the opinions of Roman Catholics.

When self-completion questionnaires are sent to the public, include a business reply envelope or card. The envelope is used where the questionnaire is contained on one or more sheets of paper. The card is used when there are only a few questions to be asked and they can be contained on a business reply card. (Remember that a business reply card is not confined to the size of a traditional post card.) It costs the district nothing to get a permit to use business reply cards and envelopes, and it pays postage on only those envelopes and cards which are actually returned in the mail.

When self-completion questionnaires are distributed to staff or students, the respondents should have clear instructions about what to do with completed questionnaires. Questionnaires given to the faculty might be collected by aides or left by staff members in a special box in school offices. Students might return questionnaires to homeroom teachers or bring them to the principal's office or to the student government office.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The district's general newsletter or special-interest newssheets may be used from time to time to ask questions of the audiences. Again, it should be made easy for respondents to get their answers back. The easier the district makes it, the more responses there will be. If residents have to put their answers into their own envelope, address the envelope, and affix a stamp, many simply will not bother.

Be explicit in the instructions for completing the questionnaire. Since no one will be there to answer respondents' questions or to interpret things they don't understand, the instructions for completing the questionnaire and returning it should leave no room for misinterpretation.

Polling by Interview

Such professional pollsters as George Gallup and Louis Harris conduct public opinion surveys through scientific sampling and by interviewing persons selected for the sample.

This technique is accurate as a method of surveying opinion, but it also requires the most technical know-how and organization. It may or may not be more costly. Cost comparison is difficult, because in a survey where a very large number of questionnaires are mailed out and a high percentage are mailed back the costs can be quite high, and in interviewing, if the leaders and interviewers are all unpaid volunteers, the cost may be low.

Districts interested in conducted their own interview surveys of public opinion from samples of the population (public, staff or students) are advised to write CFK Ltd., 3333 S. Bannock St., Englewood, Colo. 80110, for a free copy of a booklet titled "A Look Into Your School District." CFK Ltd. uses the Gallup pollsters to make an annual survey of American public opinion about the schools.

In selecting samples to be interviewed, pinpoint accurately the larger audiences from which the samples are to be drawn. For example, in the sample it is desirable to have the proper proportional representation of senior citizens and blacks. If there are 1,000 senior citizens in the district and you select a random sample of 10, then you should select five blacks for a black population of 500. Of course, there also are considerations of income level, area of town, and so on that influence how senior citizens and blacks are selected.

Data about the public can be found in such places as census reports; the offices of clerk, tax assessor, and planning board in local and county governments, and state motor vehicle bureaus.

communicating person to person

The interviewers must be trained in the rudiments of interviewing by someone who knows. (Someone in the school system might be trained for this function at a local college or research center.) The interviewers must remain neutral and cordial in the interview; they must stick exactly to the wording of questions, and they must record responses accurately. The interviewers should have a map of their assigned area, and they should not be well known in the neighborhoods they survey.

If question results are to be recorded mechanically, the "Yes-No" questions should be precoded, and codes should be devised for breaking down the responses to open-end questions into suitable categories. The information then can be transferred to key-punch cards for processing.

The district that is anxious to conduct polling through interviews of scientifically drawn samples and to record the results on key-punch cards should get professional help — at least the first time — to ensure it is done properly. Once one or more persons on the staff are trained in the process, the district should be able to carry on alone.

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Chapter 8
Wrap Up

Change is the only constant in America today. That rapid change is most evident in the public school system. What is true today can be changed by tomorrow, thanks to the immediate impact of communication vehicles like television and radio, and the influence of other popular media, including magazines and newspapers.

Once, everyone had a direct connection with the school district. People knew what was going on in the schoolhouse each day because they had children there, or listened to the tales of the classroom from visiting neighbor children.

Today, the only reports many citizens get are second-hand, and often from the mass media. To say that a complete view of our educational system is being presented is impossible.

That's why it is important to use the feedback tools available to you—as well as surveys—to gain insight about ever-changing community opinions.

Other Ways To Get Feedback

Feedback should be built right into your school program and should be an integral part of all school activities. Careful listening is probably your most valuable feedback method.

Speakers bureau—when members of your speakers bureau accept an invitation to speak be certain to ask them to include a question-and-answer session and encourage them to report what they hear.

Listeners bureau—have top staff members volunteer to attend parent and other community meetings just to answer questions and receive suggestions for the improvement of the system and the schools.

Public hearings—although these are frequently difficult and not particularly encouraged if you have a potentially volatile problem, the information gleaned can be extremely important in structuring your information program.

Key communicators—these community people who speak to a lot of other community people are not only your key resources for sending messages about the schools, but are even more important in providing you feedback on how the community views the schools. Seek their suggestions and concerns.

Student rap sessions—with the principal and/or superintendent, provide an open opportunity for student suggestions and questions about the school.

Last fifteen minutes of the class period—in many schools is devoted to an open airing of students' gripes, complaints, questions and suggestions. Teachers give principals written summaries of what's on the students' minds for them to share with other administrators.

Suggestion boxes—located strategically in the buildings into which students, staff and parents can place cards. Keep stacks of cards on display for use: "I have a question" — "I heard a rumor" — "I have an idea." Many districts also place such displays in public places—banks, stores, doctors' offices, etc.

Monthly breakfasts—for business, industry, parent and civic representatives to discuss the schools, hear a presentation by a school staff member, ask questions and give suggestions.

Meetings with the clergy—to elicit their concerns and suggestions and provide them with ongoing information about the schools.

Exit interviews—When a family or an employee leaves your school district, use this as an opportunity to find out what they thought about their experiences with you. Give them an opportunity to offer suggestions that could improve the working situation.

Keep a log—have secretaries and others answering phones in the schools keep a log of the questions they are asked. A daily and/or weekly review of this material provides you with valuable information and suggests areas in which you need to improve your communication.

Read letters to the editors column—read newspapers carefully and particularly the "letters to the editor" column to check questions and concerns about the schools.

Build listening into everything you do:

- The beauty parlor, barbershop and "bar" provide the 3B's of feedback. Listen to your fellow community members in these less than official meetings.
- Build in a five minute period of "what have you heard lately"—into the start of any school committee, staff or admin-

istration meeting. Make a list of these comments so that you can reflect on concerns and/or suggestions expressed.

- Spend a few minutes weekly with members of the support staff on a one-on-one situation asking their opinion about the schools or a specific program and providing them with an opportunity to tell you of any concerns they are having.
- Listen to the radio talk shows or "interview or opinion" type programs on local stations to hear comments about the schools.
- Listen when you attend church and community meetings or events, and build in a question about "what do you think of our schools?" Then turn your mind on to "record" so that you can recall these thoughts and put them on paper.

Chapter 9 Summary

There is no reason to wait. The resources you need to begin are minimal. A complete list of additional resources is provided in the appendix of this book, and you can get more help from survey specialists in your community. (Remember, check the local colleges or universities for help.)

Organize your thinking along these lines:

- Decide what you want to know.
- Ask yourself why you want to know this.
- Ask if you can get this information without doing a survey.
- Decide who you are going to survey.
- Determine the type of survey method you'll use.
- Establish confidence limits for the survey.
- Develop a timeline for the survey project.

After getting a firm commitment that the survey results will get the attention they deserve, organize your project according to this checklist:

1. Make a list of necessary resources (people and materials).
2. Secure financial support for the survey.
3. Draw a sample (choose the people to be interviewed).
4. Outline the content areas of the survey and frame initial questions.
5. Refine the initial questions and design a workable format.
6. Develop a first-draft questionnaire.
7. Pre-test the questionnaire.
8. Use pre-test findings to develop a final questionnaire.
9. Teach interviewers how to gather information.
10. Establish controls to make sure the interviewing gets done.
11. Conduct the interviews.
12. Prepare the questionnaires for tabulation.
13. Tabulate the data.
14. Analyze the results.
15. Report the new knowledge.

While public confidence in most public institutions has been dropping for a variety of reasons, there is a general feeling that the problem with today's schools is directly a result of the lack of involvement of the public in day-to-day issues affecting the schools. Nobody asks, so nobody cares.

Districts that have discovered surveys as a useful feedback tool are discovering that they can change public attitudes toward schools. Best of all, the public likes it.

You can't afford not to know what the public is thinking today. Get started . . . and get in touch.

I Have Met the Enemy and They Is Us

Barbara Kudlacek emphasized that educators need to be concerned about what others are saying about educators and the educational system. All employees are ambassadors for the system.

If there is an idea up for adoption by a staff, it usually goes through five stages.

1) awareness - this could take the form of the theme for the year;

2) information - people learn more about the idea through newsletters, newspaper articles, or other sources;

3) evaluation - people begin to talk to others about it, to someone who has first hand experience;

4) trial - actually trying out the idea as it applies to the individual;

5) decision - each person reaches a decision about liking or disliking the idea.

Educators must keep these stages in mind when trying to bring about change.

Good communication can aid in the change process, but all too often there are serious problems in the internal lines of communication. Often the staff members don't realize how negative they are. This can be especially true when there is public conflict brought about by collective bargaining or teacher strikes. There also exists within education an image problem with the public's concept of the quality of graduates coming out of college and university Education Departments. Educators must strive to represent these young teachers as bright, excited people. Many times the young teacher who is both bright and excited about teaching loses his/her motivation and suffers from what is commonly referred to as "burn-out." It is up to administrators, supervisors, and fellow teachers to keep each other feeling good about their jobs. In today's world many people just don't feel as good about their jobs as they once did.

Involvement can be the key to feeling good. Employee needs can be correlated to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. All employees have 1) primary needs for warmth, food, etc.; 2) safety needs; 3) love needs; 4) need for self-esteem; and 5) need for self-actualization. In her small group session, Kudlacek pointed out that there are many things that can be done to bring about change in employees so that they become good, positive communicators.

First is involvement. Staff members can be put on committees that have actual decision-making powers. Employees can be selected to be honored for a variety of reasons, not just length of service. A staff newsletter keeps everyone informed well ahead of the general public. Social activities which bring people who work together into situations which are very different from work are great ways to build morale and camaraderie.

People who feel good about their jobs--people who feel they have some control over the decisions made about their work--make for better communicators. These people communicate a positive position both internally and externally.

Internal Publications

Mary O'Neill opened her mini-session by giving participants a rationale for communicating internally with employees. Three main reasons exist for keeping internal lines of communication open. Internal communication improves morale, helps to ensure trust, and eases the consultation process. O'Neill stressed that just as it exists in external communication, the need for a two-way flow or process exists in internal communications. Employees must feel that they have something important to communicate as well!

O'Neill noted that deciding what to communicate is often the first step in the process. Among her suggested items were news from board meetings, news from the central administration, and news from employee groups at all levels. Not to be overlooked is news from or about individual staff members.

While the "what" of communicating is often thought about first, equally important is the "how." Through what vehicle will the local district or state department communicate? How often? There are many options available to meet individual needs. A semi-monthly, informal newsletter might suit the purpose of one group while another might feel the need for a formal monthly newsletter. A sheet highlighting the board meeting could be posted on an employee bulletin board along with special bulletins and weekly FYI bulletins. The non-print media of cable TV, radio public service announcements, and regular staff meetings were also mentioned as resources for communication.

In planning for an internal communications program, there should be two elements considered: a staff survey and the publication that will result from survey data. When surveying the staff, the PR specialist will want to discover what the staff's needs are, what their wants are, and what attitudes and opinions they hold about the district and the administration. The reading level of the staff should also be considered. If this is a full staff survey, the instrument and the resulting

document need to be understandable by all staff members. From the survey data, decisions can be made about the document's format, frequency, budget, information gathering system (building reporter network), and the distribution.

The internal publication program will need to be evaluated. Included in this process might be a periodic re-survey of the staff. In this way the program can be fine tuned to best meet the needs of the staff it serves.

The internal publications department should be staffed by well-qualified full- or part-time personnel who are directly responsible for the publication. Their education and experience should be based in publications and journalism. Included among the staff must be one person with whom rests the final authority for approval of published material. If these points are all taken into consideration, a strong, effective internal communications program can be established and maintained.

APPENDIX A

Conference Program

COMMUNICATION:
A Tool for School Improvement

Regional Conference

June 22-24, 1982

Austin, Texas

SHOE
GOOD MORNING, CLASS... TODAY WE'LL BE LEARNING ABOUT COMMUNICATION.
COMMUNICATION IS THE IMPARTING OF MEANINGFUL INFORMATIONAL MODES OR CONCEPTS THAT IMPACT ON INTERPERSONAL INPUTS AND INTERFACINGS.
HUH?

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Hosted by:

Southwest Educational Development Lab

PURPOSE

The general purpose of this conference is to explore positive approaches to School Public Relations.

OBJECTIVES

- to increase awareness of the School Climate program as one means of accentuating the positive
- to provide various approaches and information to enhance external communication - both what goes out and what comes in - for school improvement
- to provide information and strategies to facilitate internal lines of communication for total school improvement

SEDL REGIONAL EXCHANGE STAFF

Nancy Baker Jones
Project Coordinator

Jan Johnson Keith
Dissemination Specialist

John D. Westbrook
Dissemination Specialist

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Administrative Secretary

Martha L. Smith
Division/Project Director

COMMUNICATION: A TOOL FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Agenda

Fifth Floor Conference Room E

Tuesday, June 22, 1982 - Positive School Climate

1:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.	CONFERENCE ORIENTATION 5th Floor Conference Room Jan Johnson Keith Conference Coordinator Regional Exchange Project Southwest Educational Development Laboratory WELCOME Preston C. Kronkosky Executive Director Southwest Educational Development Laboratory Martha L. Smith Division/Project Director Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
1:30 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.	KEYNOTE ADDRESS "Good Public Relations: A Positive Approach" Bonnie Ellison Public Information Director Northside I.S.D. San Antonio, Texas
2:15 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	BREAK
2:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.	SESSION I: "School Climate" Barbara Case Assistant Principal Nimitz Junior High School Tulsa, Oklahoma
4:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	CASE STUDY: New Mexico School Climate League Richard G. Lindahl Office of Juvenile Justice Programs Santa Fe, New Mexico
5:00 p.m.	ADJOURN: DINNER ON YOUR OWN (see our list of favorites)

Wednesday, June 23, 1982 - External Communication

8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.	COFFEE AND JUICE - 5th Floor Conference Room
9:00 a.m. - 9:45 a.m.	KEYNOTE ADDRESS "Getting Your Message to the Public" Larry Ascough Associate Superintendent - Communications Dallas I.S.D. Dallas, Texas
9:45 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	BREAK
10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	SESSION II "Working with the Media" Rodney Davis Press Officer Dallas I.S.D. Dallas, Texas
11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	LUNCH
1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. (2nd Floor Board Room)	SESSION III-A (repeated at 2:45 p.m.) "Involving Total Staff for Good P.R." Bonnie Ellison Public Information Director Northside I.S.D. San Antonio, Texas
(2nd Floor Training Room)	SESSION III-B (repeated at 2:45 p.m.) Larry Ascough Associate Superintendent - Communications Dallas I.S.D. Dallas, Texas
2:30 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.	BREAK
2:45 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.	REPEAT SESSIONS
4:15 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. (5th Floor Conference Room)	WRAP-UP FOR DAY 2
	DINNER ON YOUR OWN

Thursday, June 24, 1982 - Internal Communication

8:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.	COFFEE AND JUICE - 5th Floor Conference Room
8:30 a.m. - 9:15 a.m.	KEYNOTE ADDRESS: "I Have Met the Enemy and They Is Us" Barbara Kudlacek Director of Public Information Topeka Public Schools Topeka, Kansas
9:15 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	SESSION IV-A (repeated at 10:45 a.m.) "Strategies for Improving Internal Lines of Communication" Barbara Kudlacek Topeka Public Schools Topeka, Kansas
(2nd Floor Training Room)	SESSION IV-B (repeated at 10:45 a.m.) "Internal Publications" Mary O'Neill Office of Communications Ft. Worth I.S.D. Ft. Worth, Texas
10:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.	BREAK
10:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.	REPEAT SESSIONS
12:15 p.m. - 12:30 p.m. (5th Floor Conference Room)	CONFERENCE WRAP-UP Reimbursement Procedures GOOD-BYE! GOOD TRIP!

PARTICIPANT LIST

"Communication: A Tool for School Improvement"

June 22-24, 1982

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APPENDIX B

Evaluation Summary

REGIONAL EXCHANGE

PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE

1. I represent my *14* SEA *1* IEA *10* LEA ___ HEA *1* Other

2. ☐ I am a teacher.
   1 ☐ I train teachers.
   ☐ I train those who train teachers.
   16 ☐ I have more administrative responsibilities than training responsibilities.
   12 ☐ Other *(See next page)*

3. This conference will assist me in:

   ☐ teaching.
   12 ☐ conducting inservice.
   7 ☐ training others to conduct inservice.
   17 ☐ other *(See next page)*

4. The program objectives were:

   well defined 5 (*17*) 4 (*7*) 3 2 1 (*1*) vague

5. The program objectives were attained

   fully 5 (*16*) 4 (*9*) 3 2 1 not at all

6. The program climate promoted freedom of expression.

   agree 5 (*20*) 4 (*2*) 3 (*3*) 2 1 disagree

7. The program format facilitated learning.

   agree 5 (*19*) 4 (*5*) 3 (*1*) 2 1 disagree

8. The information provided at the conference is applicable to my work.

   just what I need 5 (*14*) 4 (*8*) 3 (*1*) 2 (*2*) 1 useless

9. The amount of information provided at the conference was:

   ☐ too much *25* ☐ sufficient ☐ insufficient

10. The information provided at the conference was:

    ☐ too complex *25* ☐ appropriate ☐ too simple

11. The time allowed to cover the material at this conference was:

    ☐ too much *25* ☐ sufficient ☐ insufficient

(over)

12. The time allowed to ask questions was:

☐ too much *23* ☐ sufficient ☐ insufficient

13. I recommend this conference to others.

strongly agree 5 4 3 2 1 strongly disagree
19 *5* *1*

14. I would like a follow-up conference on this subject in my state.

strongly agree 5 4 3 2 1 strongly disagree
15 *4* *2* *1* *1*

15. If you would like a follow-up conference on this subject in your state, please give the name, agency/office, and telephone number of the person with whom the SEDL/RX should be in touch for further discussion. (No commitment on your agency's part will be implied.)

12 participants provided names of contact people

16. I plan to share information gained in this conference with

11 participants provided 15 names, plus categories of people (NSPRA members,
(name) (title) (agency)

state departments of education, LEAs, inservice employee groups, staff, voc. ed.
(name) (title) (agency)
units, and "everyone"

17. I want more information about *(See next page)*

18. The purpose of the Regional Exchange is to *(See next page)*

19. Comments: *(See next page)*

The Regional Exchange is one of eight projects nationwide, funded by the National Institute of Education to disseminate the results of educational research to practitioners. Contact the Regional Exchange at: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 211 East 7th Street, Austin, Texas 78701.

Written Comments

2. *Other duties:*

Press secretary to state superintendent
PR
Public information
Communications
Dissemination
PR & Media
Assistant director for dissemination - train SDE staff, LEA personnel
PR/Comm/Dissem.
Communications (2 participants responded with this answer)
Juvenile Justice - Corrections

3. *Other areas in which conference will assist:*

Establishing public relations field contracts & obtaining practical suggestions
School P.R. work
Work more effectively in planning with my colleagues
Improving the communication program of my district
Communications program
Carrying out job responsibilities
Revising communications program to meet actual needs
Implementing better ideas for communication
PR related work
Motivating coworkers
Bringing ideas for better internal & external communication to the SDE
Improve internal & external communications
Public relations
Improving the school climate process in New Mexico

17. *I want more information about:*

Internal publications (pamphlets, brochures); PR associations
What the SEDL does
How to contract with presenters, etc.
Securing speakers for a regional conference
I have to digest what I have first. Will follow-up on additional info. needed
School climate in Tulsa (Barbara Case)

18. *The purpose of the Regional Exchange is to:*

Disseminate information in a practical manner to education specialists
Disseminate educational information
Disseminate information (2 participants responded with this answer)
Facilitate communications, improve programs
Disseminate the results of educational research to practitioners
Share ideas & communicate
Share R&D
Share ideas
Assist states in inservice responsibilities in technical assistance
Facilitate professional growth

19. *Comments:*

A very good conference.

I like idea of multi-state meetings to exchange information, ideas, etc.

This was an excellent workshop. My enthusiasm has been renewed.

Bonnie Ellison's first session was a total waste of time; however, her small workshop was good. Barbara Case was excellent and that was totally new info. to me. Richard Lindahl was dull and unfortunately late in the day also. Larry was funny but not too informative. Barbara Kudlacek was excellent as was Mary O'Neill. Rodney Davis was informative. All in all, I really enjoyed it and learned. The atmosphere for learning you established was excellent.

Excellent conference - well planned and presented. Keyed to needs of participants.

Regional Exchange has been one of the most useful systems yet devised for use of federal funds to assist LEA's in their professional growth!

Great conference.

Excellent conference -- really enjoyed it.

Making top level management aware of communication needs via a conference like this would be invaluable.

Presenters were excellent--I really appreciate the opportunity to share ideas and solutions.

I learned more in these 2½ days than many other workshops over the past 2 years combined. Would love to attend other similar workshops.

Session was well arranged in all respects. I was impressed with content, quality of information presented.

I really enjoyed and learned a great deal these past few days. As a new "guy" on the public relations team, I find this workshop to have been an invaluable experience.

Need job-like session (district size).

Great!!

I enjoyed all sessions--especially those with hand-on materials.

Good facilities; hotel accommodations good; format could have allowed more time to interact with persons from the same state during conference hours (would have been helpful for me). Great group from SEDL!

All presenters were excellent, knowledgeable, prepared.

The school climate presentation by Barbara Case (Tulsa) was excellent, & I hope to use her in workshops in New Mexico. The Mississippi people expressed interest in initiating school climate in their state.

SOUTHWEST EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LABORATORY
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The Regional Exchange at Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL/RX) is one of eight regional exchanges and four central support services which comprise the Research & Development Exchange (RDx) supported by the National Institute of Education. The RDx, begun in October 1976, has four broad goals:

- To promote coordination among dissemination and school improvement programs.
- To promote the use of R&D outcomes that support dissemination and school improvement efforts.
- To provide information, technical assistance, and/or training which support dissemination and school improvement efforts.
- To increase shared understanding and use of information about client needs to order to influence R&D outcomes.

The regional exchanges in the RDx act as extended "arms" of the network, each serving a set of states which make up their region. The eight regional exchanges (known as RX's) are:

AEL/RX	Appalachia Educational Laboratory, Charleston WV
CEMREL/RX	CEMREL, Inc., St. Louis MO
McREL/RX	Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory, Kansas City KS
NE/RX	Northeast Regional Exchange, Merimack Education Center, Chelmsford MA
NWREL/RX	Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Portland OR
RBS/RX	Research for Better Schools, Philadelphia PA
SEDL/RX	Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, Austin TX
SWRL/RX	Southwest Regional Laboratory, Los Alamitos CA

The four central support services, which serve the entire RDx in their respective areas of expertise, are:

RDIS	Research & Development Interpretation Services, CEMREL, Inc.
RRS	Research & Referral Service, Ohio State University, Columbus OH
SSS	System Support Service, Far West Laboratory, San Francisco CA
DSS	Dissemination Support Service, Northwest Regional Laboratory

The SEDL Regional Exchange (SEDL/RX) provides information and technical assistance services to the six states in its region. It directly serves and is guided by an Advisory Board composed of designated SEA and OSRR VI participants. For further information contact the Advisory Board member from your State Department of Education, the OSRR VI, or the Director of the SEDL/RX, Dr. Martha L. Smith. The Advisory Board members are:

Arkansas	Sara Murphy	501/370-5036
Louisiana	Sue Wilson	504/342-4268
Mississippi	Clyde Hatten	601/354-7329
New Mexico	Alan Morgan	505/827-5441
Oklahoma	Jack Craddock	405/521-3331
Texas	Mary Wightman	512/475-5601
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Southwest Educational Development Laboratory